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GUIDELINES FOR GOOD HORSEKEEPING



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A**GENERAL FEEDING RULES**

1. Know the approximate weight and age of each animal.
2. Never feed moldy, musty, dusty, or frozen feed.
3. Inspect the feed box at frequent intervals; by so doing it is easy to detect when a horse goes off feed.
4. Keep the feed and water containers clean.
5. Make certain that the horse's teeth are sound.
6. Don't feed a grain-based ration to a hot horse; and allow time for digestion following feeding before working him.
7. Feed horses as individuals — learn the peculiarities and desires of each animal; each one is different, just as people are different.
8. See that horses get adequate exercise. It improves their appetite, digestion, and overall well-being.
9. Do not feed from your hand. This can lead to "nibbling."
10. Horses fitted for show or sale should be let down in condition gradually. Experienced horsemen accomplish this difficult task and yet retain strong, vigorous animals by cutting down gradually on the feed allowance, and increasing the exercise.
11. The average horse eats approximately one and one-half to two pounds of hay for each 100 pounds of body weight per day.

B**SIGNS OF A WELL-FED, HEALTHY HORSE**

1. He looks completely unworried when resting.
2. In horse vernacular, he is "bright eyed and bushy tailed", and he will prick up his ears at the slightest provocation.
3. The appetite is good, as indicated by neighing and pawing prior to feeding, and by attacking the feed with relish.
4. A sleek, oily coat and a pliable and elastic skin characterize healthy horses. When the hair coat loses its luster and the skin becomes dry, scurfy, and hidebound, there is usually trouble.

5. Eye membranes, which can be seen when the lower lid is pulled down, are pink and moist.
6. The consistency of the feces varies with the diet, for example, lush pasture usually makes for looseness, and pellets generally make for moist feces. Neither extreme dryness nor scouring should exist. Both the feces and urine should be passed without effort, and should be free from blood, mucus, or pus.

C

WATER

1. Horses should have ample quantities of clean, fresh, cool water. They will drink 10 to 15 gallons daily; the amount depends on weather, amount of work done, and rations fed.
2. Free access to water is desirable. When this is not possible, horses should be watered at approximately the same times daily.
3. Opinions vary among horsemen as to the proper time and method of watering horses. Most horsemen feel that water may be given before, during, or after feeding. All agree, however, that regularity and frequency are desirable.
4. Frequent, small waterings between feedings are desirable during warm weather, or when the animal is being put to hard use. Do not allow a horse to drink heavily when he is hot, because he may founder. Do not allow a horse to drink quantities of water just before being put to work.

D

STABLE MANAGEMENT

1. Remove the top layer of clay floors yearly; replace with fresh clay, level and tamp. Also, keep the stable floor higher than the surrounding area, thereby making for dryness.
2. Keep stalls well lighted.
3. Use properly constructed hayracks to lessen waste and contamination of hay; with the possible exception of maternity stalls.

4. Scrub food containers at such intervals as necessary, and always after feeding a wet mash.
5. Work over bedding daily, removing excrement, wet, stained or soiled material, and provide fresh bedding.
6. Practice rigid stable sanitation to prevent fecal contamination of feed and water.
7. Lead foals when taking them from the stall to the paddock and back, as a way in which to further their training.
8. Restrict the ration when horses are idle, and provide either a wet bran mash the evening before an idle day or turn idle horses to pasture.
9. Provide proper ventilation at all times; by means of open doors, windows that open inwardly from the top, or stall partitions slatted at the top.
10. Keep stables in repair at all times, so as to lessen injury hazards.

E**KIND AND AMOUNT OF BEDDING**

1. Cereal straw or wood shavings generally make the best bedding material.
2. A soft, comfortable bed should insure proper rest. The animal will be much easier to groom if its bedding is kept clean.
3. A minimum daily allowance of clean bedding is 10 to 15 pounds per animal.

F**HANDLING HORSE MANURE**

1. Both small and large horse establishments face the problem of what to do with horse manure, once it is removed from the stable. Because the feces of horses are the primary source of infection of internal parasites, fresh horse manure should never be spread

on pastures grazed by horses. The following alternatives for disposing of horse manure exist:

Spread fresh manure on those fields that will be plowed and cropped, where there is sufficient land and this is feasible.

Store the manure in a closed container and arrange for removal.

Compost it in an area which will neither pollute a stream nor be offensive to the neighbors; then spread it on the land.

G	GROOMING
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1. Proper grooming is necessary to make and keep a horse attractive, and maintain good health and condition.
2. Grooming cleans the hair, keeps the skin functioning naturally, lessens skin diseases and parasites, and improves the condition and fitness of the muscles.
3. Horses that are stabled or are in small corrals should be groomed thoroughly at least once daily. Those that are worked or exercised should be groomed both before leaving the stable and immediately upon their return.
4. Shampooing removes the dirt, stains, and sweat that cannot be removed by grooming; and makes for a fine hair coat with good sheen.
5. Shampoo as frequently as determined by work, and weather. Always shampoo horse following use on a muddy ring, trail or track—or when hot and muggy, and he's lathered up.
6. Wet animal thoroughly all over with warm water alone. Apply with a large sponge. Start with the head, wetting between the ears and on the foretop (but do not get water in the ears), over the face and cheeks, and around the eyes and muzzle. Then wet the neck, chest, withers, shoulder and back; sponge the belly and legs thoroughly.
7. The tail is washed by sponging with plenty of water at the tail head, then putting the full length into bucket, lifting to the bone;

slosh the tail around. Then give the tail a snap from side to side to swish out the water.

8. Do not wash in cold weather unless you are able to thoroughly dry the horse before putting him away.

H.

CARE OF THE FEET

Each day, clean the feet of horses that are shod, stabled, or used, and inspect for loose shoes and thrush. Thrush is a disease of the foot, caused by a necrotic fungus characterized by a pungent odor. It causes a deterioration of tissues in the cleft of the frog or in the junction between the frog and bars. This disease produces lameness and, if not treated, can be serious.

I.

SHOEING

Horses should be shod when they are to be used on hard surfaces for any period of time. Also, shoes may be used to change gaits and action, correct faulty hoof structure or growth, protect the hoof from such conditions as corns, contraction, or cracks, and aid in gripping the track. Shoes should be made to fit the foot, not the foot to fit the shoe. Reshoe or reset at 6 to 8 week intervals. Shoeing should be done either by a farrier, or by a person who has taken sufficient instruction from a master of the art.

J.

EXERCISE

1. Let your horses exercise as much as possible on pastures. They will develop strong, sound feet and legs from outdoor exercise. If no pasture is available, exercise mature animals for an hour or two a day under saddle or in harness.
2. Horses with bad feet frequently cannot exercise on roads. Those with faulty tendons may not be able to exercise under saddle. Allow such animals to exercise in a large paddock, or on a 30 or 40 foot rope, or by leading.

K.**BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT**

1. Properly designed, constructed and arranged horse buildings and equipment make for increased animal comfort, as well as feed and labor efficiency. Such buildings will also add to the beauty of the landscape. In serving these purposes, it is not necessary that they be either elaborate or expensive.
2. The primary reasons for having horse buildings are to:
 - Provide a place in which to confine horses and store feed and tack; and
 - Modify the environment.

L.**HORSE BARN**

1. The barn should be located so as to be:

Accessible — It should be on an all-weather roadway or lane, thereby facilitating the use of horses, delivery of feed and bedding, and removal of manure. Also, it should be adjacent, or in near proximity, to a corral, paddock, or pasture.

High and dry — It should be on high ground, with drainage away from it; thereby assuring dryness.

Expandable — There should be provision for easy expansion, if and when necessary. Often a building can be expanded in length provided no other structures or utilities interfere.

Convenient to water and electricity — Water should be available and plentiful; and electricity should be in near proximity.

2. All horse barns—regardless of kind, use, and purposes—should meet the following requisites:

Environmental control — Modify winter and summer temperatures for horses; protect them from rain, snow, sun, and wind; minimize stress.

Reasonable cost, along with minimum maintenance — Initial cost is important, but consideration should also be given to durability and maintenance, and to such intangible values as pride and satisfaction, influence on the children, and advertising value.

Adequate space — Too little space may jeopardize the health and well being of horses, whereas more space than needed makes for unnecessary expense.

Storage for feed, bedding, and tack — These necessities are generally stored in the same building where used.

Well ventilated — This refers to the changing of air — the replacement of foul air with fresh air. There should be a minimum of moisture and odor, and the barn should be free from drafts. Horse barn ventilation may be achieved through one or more of the following: opening under the roof, a ridge vent, hinged windows, dutch doors and/or fans.

Attractiveness — An attractive horse barn makes for very good living and enhances the sale value of the property. A horse barn that has utility value, is in good proportions, and is in harmony with the natural surroundings, will have aesthetic value. Good design is never achieved by indulgence in fads, frills, or highly ornamental features.

Minimum fire risk — The use of fire resistant materials gives added protection to horses. Fire retarding paints and sprays are available. Installation of fire extinguishers/sprinklers is recommended.

Safety — Safety features should be observed, such as eliminating sharp objects on which horses may become injured. Also make arrangements for feeding and watering without walking behind horses.

Labor saving — This requisite is a must in any commercial horse establishment. Also, where horses are kept for pleasure, it is well to minimize drudgery and alleviate unnecessary labor in feeding, cleaning, and handling.

Protect horse health — Healthy horses are superior and efficient performers; hence, horse barns should provide healthful living conditions for the occupants.

Rodent and bird control — Feed and tack storage areas should be rodent and bird proof.

Surrounded by suitable corrals and paddocks — Horse barns should be provided with well-drained, safe, attractive, and durably fenced corrals or paddocks, either adjacent to or in close proximity to the barn.

Flexibility — Both technological development and possible shifts in use make it desirable that horse barns be as flexible as possible; even to the point that they can be cheaply and easily converted into cabins, garages, storage buildings, or utility facilities. Also, for suburbanites and renters, portable barns are advantageous.

M

FENCES FOR HORSES

1. Good fences will:
 - Maintain boundaries
 - Make horse operations safe and efficient
 - Reduce losses to both animals and crops
 - Increase property values
 - Promote better relationships between neighbors
 - Lessen accidents from animals getting on roads, and
 - Add to the attractiveness and distinctiveness of the premises.
2. Barbed wire as a fence is most dangerous and should be avoided.
3. Any fence should be strong enough, visible enough and high enough — preferably about five feet — so that a horse will not be tempted to jump over it.
4. If boards or rails are used, spacing between should be sufficiently narrow so that a horse cannot stick his head between rails or boards.
5. If strands of wire are used, the lowest strand should be at least two feet above ground where a horse is less apt to playfully stick a front foot over it.

1. **Internal parasites** — Some 150 different kinds of internal parasites infect horses throughout the world, and probably no individual animal is ever entirely free of them. They may be located in practically every tissue and cavity of the body. However, most of them locate in the alimentary tract, lungs, body cavity, or bloodstream. Those which inhabit the digestive system usually become localized in specific parts of it. Still others are migratory or wandering in their habits, traveling throughout different parts of the body.
2. **External parasites** — Horses are subject to attack by a variety of external parasites, just as are other animals. These pests lower the animal's vitality, mar the hair, coat and skin, and produce a general unhealthy condition. External parasites are also responsible for the spread of several serious diseases of horses which exact a heavy toll each year in sickness and deaths. Thus, Equine piroplasmiasis (or **Babesiosis**) is transmitted by a tick (**Dermacentor nitens** Neumann). Mosquitoes (**Culicidae**) are vectors of equine infectious anemia (swamp fever) and equine encephalomyelitis (sleeping sickness).
3. Prevent or control parasites by adhering to the following program:
Provide good sanitary conditions and habits, and a high level of nutrition.

Have adequate acreage; use temporary seeded pasture rather than permanent pasture, and practice rotation grazing.

Pasture young stock on clean pastures, never allowing them to graze on an infested area unless the area has been either plowed or left idle for a year in the interim.

Do not spread fresh horse manure on pastures grazed by horses; either store the manure in a suitable pit for at least two weeks or spread it on fields that are to be plowed and cropped.

When small fields or paddocks must be used, pick up the droppings at frequent intervals.

Keep pastures mowed and harrowed (use a chain harrow).

Prevent fecal contamination of feed and water.

When internal parasites are present, administer suitable vermifuges and later move the animal to a clean area.

When external parasites are present, apply the proper insecticide.

If cattle are on the farm, alternate the use of pastures between cattle and horses, since horse parasites will die in cattle.

Avoid overgrazing, because there are more parasites on the bottom inch of grass.

4. When signs of infectious disease are encountered, promptly isolate affected animals, provide them with separate water and feed containers, and follow the instructions and prescribed treatment of the veterinarian.

O

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

1. Be sure there are no dangerous objects in stalls or pens such as protruding nails, broken boards, pitchforks, shovels, buckets, sharp objects and just plain junk that your horse may step on or run into and suffer injury.
2. Be sure all grain is stored in a safe place where it will be impossible for a horse to accidentally reach it and overeat.
3. Fire protection is a must. Be certain to keep a connected hose in the barn area at all times. Consult the Los Angeles Fire Department for the type of equipment necessary to protect your facility.

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